



TOWN OF FAIRFAX

STAFF REPORT

August 3, 2016

TO: Mayor, Town Council

FROM: Jim Moore, Director of Planning and Building Services
Garrett Toy, Town Manager *GT*

SUBJECT: Discuss/consider options regarding use of planning facilitator and land use design firm for the Town Center Plan Workshop #2 (scheduled for Oct. 1)

RECOMMENDATION

Discuss/consider options regarding use of planning facilitator and land use design firm for the Town Center Plan Workshop #2 (rescheduled for October 1) and direct staff as appropriate.

BACKGROUND

The first of three workshops regarding the creation of a Town Center Plan was held on Tuesday, June 14, and was well attended by the public.

This first Workshop focused on the review of (1) the Town's existing General Plan Policies relative to the creation of a Town Center Plan (TCP), (2) existing plans (e.g., the Parkade conceptual plan), and (3) proposed projects (e.g., the Bolinas Road Sidewalk Improvement proposal). At the meeting, staff memorialized the participants' comments on an "issues and opportunities" list.

At its July meeting, the Council considered a staff report on the preparation for the next Workshop regarding the Town Center Plan. Workshop #2 is intended to distill the list of "issues and opportunities" that came out of Workshop #1 into possible options to address the problems and capitalize on opportunities for improving the town center area. This second Workshop is where the creative thinking (e.g., "brainstorming") with stakeholders will take place.

Staff indicated we had previously intended to prepare for and conduct the second TCP Workshop with the assistance of the Town's prime planning consultant LAK. However, both town planning staff and LAK are currently involved with processing three very time consuming project applications and/or zoning changes (e.g., the Christ Lutheran Church Senior Housing application)

As a result of our limited staff resources as well as the need to facilitate more community input, staff sought out specialized planning expertise intended to help prepare for - and facilitate - TCP Workshop #2. Given the short time frame required for this time-intensive help, staff indicated it was intending to use a planning and design firm in Berkeley.

DISCUSSION

At its July 13th meeting, the Council expressed concern with using an out-of-the-county land use design firm and suggested that staff find a local firm with experience in Marin County. The Council also indicated that it would prefer if the facilitator was independent of the land use design firm. The Council also requested that the August 6th workshop be rescheduled to October 1st to address the community's concerns about lack of attendance due to August vacations. Workshop #2 is now set for October 1, from 9 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Staff indicated it would report back at this meeting with our research and recommendation. However, in the short turn-around between the July 13th and August 3rd Council meetings, staff had not yet received proposals from the three local land use design firms that were contacted:

- SWA- Landscape Architecture/Planning/Urban Design, Sausalito
- WRA- Environmental Consultants, San Rafael
- RHAA- Landscape Architecture, Mill Valley

We are awaiting proposals from several facilitators as well.

As a result, staff will provide the Council with supplemental materials prior to the August 3rd meeting, to include a recommendation and options for the Council to consider regarding firms and facilitators, as well as their qualifications and the range of costs.

FISCAL IMPACT

Workshop costs are included in the FY16-17 Planning Division budget.